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Seoul Mate . . .

President Reagan announced yesterday that he will nominate **James R. Lilley**, a former CIA official, veteran diplomat and all-around Asia hand, to be ambassador to South Korea. Lilley, 58, who was born in Tsingtao, China, would succeed Ambassador **Richard Walker**.

Since 1984, Lilley has been serving as deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs. He previously was director in Taiwan of the American Institute, the "unofficial" agency that handles U.S. relations with Taiwan, and was a consultant to the Hunt Oil Co.

A White House announcement provided unusual details of Lilley's service from 1951 to 1978 with the Central Intelligence Agency, saying that he served as an officer with the CIA in Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, Cambodia and Thailand from 1951 to 1964, and that he was deputy chief of station in Lagos, Nigeria, in 1965, and in Hong Kong from 1968 to 1970.

He was CIA station chief in Peking in 1973-75, when the United States and China established liaison offices that led to full restoration of relations in 1979. During most of that period, his boss was **George Bush**, then chief of the U.S. liaison office.

—Marjorie Williams